

WildLink

Connecting people to the
diversity of wilderness



Mission Statement:



- WildLink's mission is to ensure that the diverse California citizenry is informed, invested, and committed to the enduring resource of wilderness.

Why WildLink?

- National Survey on Recreation and the Environment
- Quickly changing demographics in the U.S.
- Risk to the National Wilderness Preservation System



What is WildLink?



- Wilderness Expeditions
- Distance Learning projects on the WildLink website
- Teacher Development Programs
- Youth Summit Meetings
- WildLink Family Weekend
- WildLink Ambassador Projects

Target Audience

- 9th-11th grade
- Culturally diverse (as a group)
- Low income
- 1st generation considering college
- Demographically unlikely to attend college
- Good spokesperson for peers
- Scientific aptitude
- Artistic and/or writing aptitude
- Involved in extracurricular activities
- Haven't had any/many outdoor experiences (hiking, camping)



Outreach Numbers



- 30 teachers for development weekend
- 30 family members & alumni for Family Weekend
- 72 direct student expedition impact
- Direct contacts: total varies, 300-500 per year
- Indirect contacts: 360 per year
- Total average per year: 700-800 per year
- 1500 last year

Where it all started

- Late 1990's: Wilderness managers' concerns about changing demographics in California
- Fall 1998: First WildLink meeting convenes
- 1999: Yosemite Institute and the Student Conservation Association enlisted as WildLink partners
- Fall 2000: First WildLink expedition
- 2004: Yosemite Institute enlists as full partner



School Partners

- Madera High School, (Madera)
- Vista High School, (San Pablo)
- Harbor City Boys and Girls Club, (Los Angeles)
- Kingsburg High School, (Kingsburg)
- Jill Kinmont Boothe School, (Bishop)
- Reedley and Parlier High Schools, (Reedley & Parlier)
- Reseda High School, (Los Angeles)
- Sunnyside High School, (Fresno)
- Turlock High School, (Turlock)
- Liberty High School, (Bakersfield)
- Franklin High School, (Stockton)
- The Detroit Metropolitan Community Center (Detroit, MI)
- The Academy for New Americans, (Fresno)



Key Partners



- The National Park Service
- USDA Forest Service
- Yosemite Institute
- Richard Iglehart Wilderness Foundation
- Yosemite Fund
- Sequoia Natural History Association
- CORE (Creative Recreational Outdoor Edventures)
- Central California Consortium
- National Hispanic Environmental Council
- California Wild Heritage Campaign
- Our tireless teachers... there are from 12-18 schools involved with the program

Staff and Volunteer Base

Yosemite

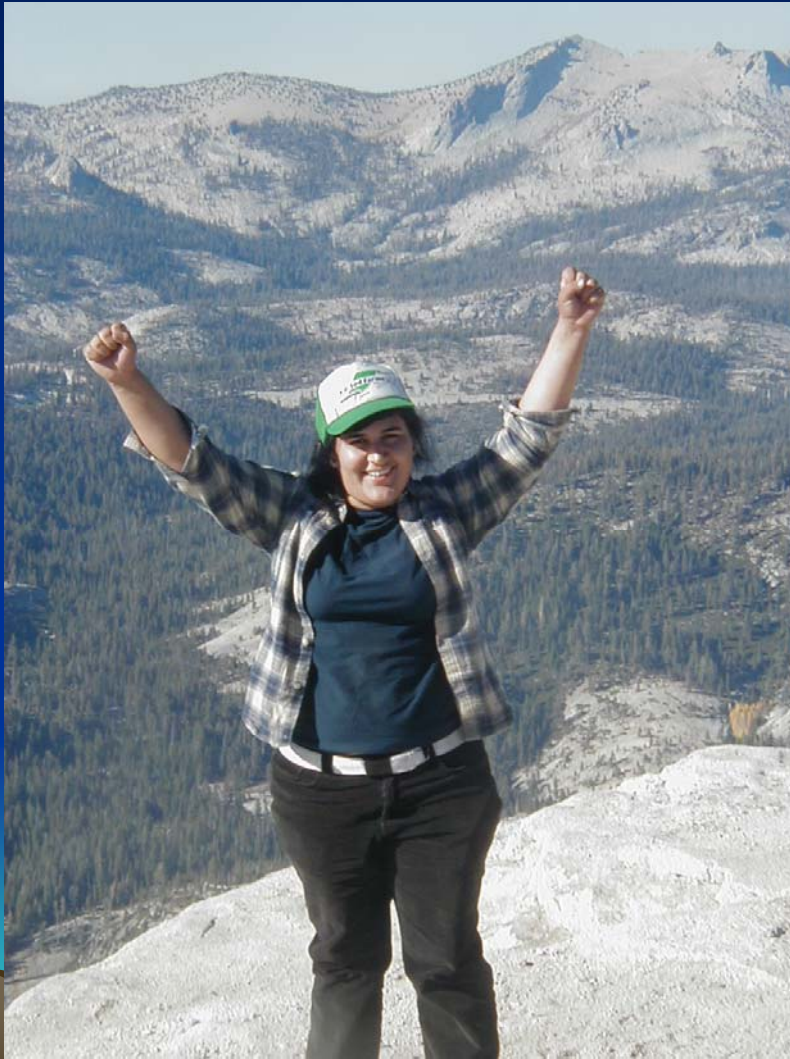
- WildLink Program Director
- An instructor from the Yosemite Institute (all expeditions)
- Teachers

Sequoia-King's Canyon

- Sequoia Natural History Association
- Creative Outdoor Recreational Edventures (CORE)
- Teachers



Primary Funding Support



- National Park Service
- Yosemite Institute
- USDA Forest Service
- Yosemite Fund
- UC Merced
- Richard Iglehart Wilderness Foundation
- Irvine Foundation
- Variable foundations from year to year

Greatest Personal Satisfaction



Biggest Frustrations

- Funding
- Staffing
- Wide geographical area
- School administrators
- Transportation issues
- Standardized testing and fitting wilderness into high school curriculum
- Internship program development



Recipe for WildLink



- Students
- Teachers
- Backpacking equipment
- Educational Guiding Service
- Wilderness

If we had it to do over again...

- Hire a full time Program Director from the start
- Less of a geographic spread of our target communities



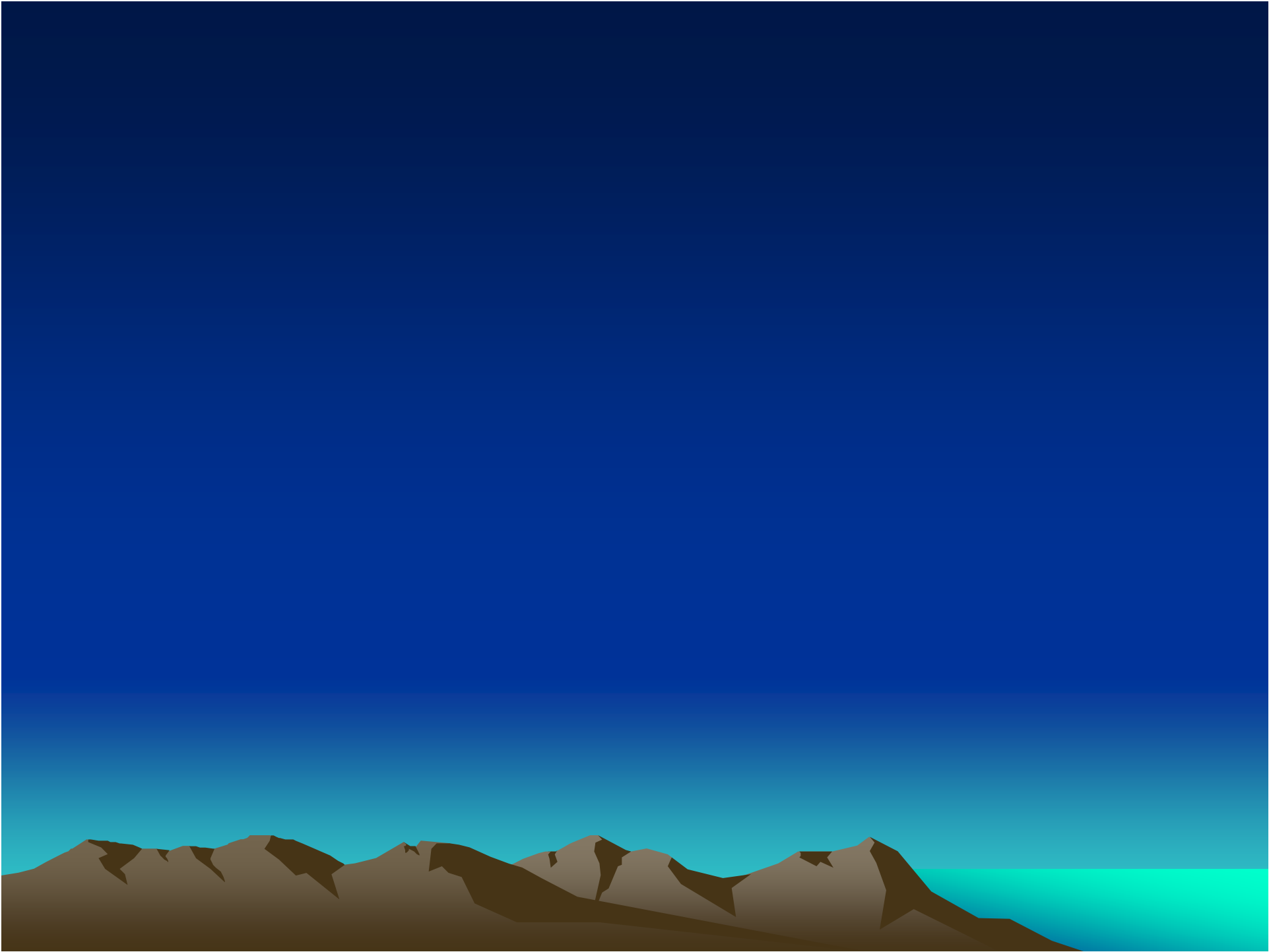
Ten years from now...



- WildLink in many other public lands areas all over the country
- More staff and expeditions here in Yosemite
- WildLink internship program
- Better, deeper connections to WildLink alumni and communities
- Deepening relationships with established partners
- Continually cultivating new partnerships

Voices from the Wilderness





Questions?



Want to Learn More?

<http://wildlink.wilderness.net>

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Wilderness

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